

Message Text

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12

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SUBJ: JSP CONVENTION

SUMMARY: AT THE JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY'S (JSP) 39TH ANNUAL CONVENTION MARCH 6-7, THE JSP LEADERSHIP, WITH CONSIDERABLE ASSIST FROM THE LOCKHEED SCANDAL AND THE PROSPECT OF A GENERAL ELECTION, MANAGED TO KEEP THE USUAL DIVISIVE IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE FROM CREATING A MAJOR HEADACHE. IT SUCCEEDED IN SHELIVING AT LEAST TEMPORARILY SUCH CONTROL-VERSIAL ISSUES AS THE PARTY'S RELATIONS WITH USSR AND PRC, NORTHERN TERRITORIES PROBLEM AND ALLEGED COLLABORATION WITH THE RULING LDP IN THE DIET. NEITHER RELATIONS WITH US NOR VICE PRESIDENT EDA'S RECENT US VISIT SPARKED SIGNIFICANT DEBATE. HOWEVER, JSP'S SOCIALISM ASSOCIATION (SA), A HARD LINE MARXIST GROUP TRYING TO PUSH PARTY AND ITS PLATFORM EVEN FARTHER TO THE LEFT, WAS CLEARLY IN EVIDENCE

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AT CONVENTION, THEREBY DEMONSTRATING ITS RAPIDLY GROWING

STRENGTH AMONG PARTY'S LOCAL ACTIVISTS WHO CONTROL SELECTION OF CONVENTION DELEGATES. SA WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY RAISE SAME ISSUES AT NEXT POST-ELECTION CONVENTION WHEN IT IS GENERALLY EXPECTED TO MAKE SERIOUS EFFORT TO wrest LEADERSHIP OF PARTY FROM HANDS OF JSP DIET MEMBERS. END SUMMARY.

1. JSP'S 39TH ANNUAL CONVENTION, MARCH 6-7, WAS NO EXCEPTION TO THE RULE THAT JSP CONVENTIONS GENERALLY TEND TOWARD HIGHLY THEORETICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL DEBATES WHICH BEAR LITTLE RELATION TO THE REAL CONCERNS OF PARTY'S DIET MEMBERS OR THE TEN MILLION VOTERS THEY ATTRACT AT POLLS. THIS TIME, HOWEVER, RATHER THAN USUAL CLASH BETWEEN PARTY'S LEFTWING (SASAKI) AND RIGHTWING (EDA) FACTIONS, DEBATE WAS DOMINATED BY A SMALL GROUP OF PARTY IDEOLOGUES BELONGING TO PRO-SOVIET SA WHO, CLAIMING TO BE PARTY'S ONLY LEGITIMATE INTERPRETERS OF ORTHODOX MARXISM-LENINISM, TOOK ON THE PARTY LEADERSHIP AND ALL OTHER FACTIONS ON A HOST OF ISSUES. SA GROUP WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF JSP CHAIRMAN NARITA'S SIGNING OF THE ANTI-HEGEMONY COMMUNIQUE IN PEKING LAST MARCH, OF JSP'S SUPPORT IN DIET LAST SPRING OF PRIMUM MIKI'S ELECTORAL REFORM BILL, OF RECENT STATEMENTS BY PRO-CHINA JSP DIET MEMBERS AT VARIANCE WITH PARTY POLICY ON THE RETURN OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES, AND OF VICE CHAIRMAN EDA'S RECENT PARTICIPATION WITH OTHER NON-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS IN "DISCUSSION GROUP" AIMING AT OPPOSITION REALIGNMENT ORGANIZED BY SOCIALIST ELDER STATESMAN AND TOKAI UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT MATSUMAE. (SIGNIFICANTLY, EDA'S US TRIP WAS NOT SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY.) IN ADDITION, SA MEMBERS DEMANDED REVISION OF THE PARTY PLATFORM, WHICH THEY REGARD AS PRO-CHINESE, AND, IN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF DELEGATE STRENGTH, SUCCEEDED IN ELECTING THEIR MAN TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE PARTY'S ACTION POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE OVER OPPOSITION OF ALL OTHER FACTIONS IN PARTY.

3. DESPITE OCCASIONAL ORATORICAL FIREWORKS, INCLUDING THE FIRST PUBLIC ATTACK ON "US IMPERIALISM" SINCE EDA'S VISIT TO THE US, CHAIRMAN NARITA AND SEC GEN ISHIBASHI, THROUGH SKILLFULLY USING THE LOCKHEED ISSUE AND FORTHCOMING GENERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ELECTION AS RALLYING POINTS, AND BY AGREEING TO FURTHER STUDY OF UNRESOLVED IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES RAISED BY SA, WERE ABLE TO DEFLECT MUCH OF SA'S CRITICISM AND SECURE UNANIMOUS APPROVAL OF THE LEADERSHIP'S ACTION PROGRAM, THEREBY PUTTING PUBLIC SEAL OF UNITY ON PARTY PRIOR TO ELECTIONS. THEY ALSO PUSHED THROUGH RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR A MORE SEARCHING DIET INVESTIGATION OF LOCKHEED AFFAIR, OPPOSING US AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS' "COLLUSION IN COVER-UP" AND

ADVOCATING TRANSFORMATION OF DIET'S LOCKHEED INVESTIGATION INTO MASS MOVEMENT, AIMED AT TOPPLING MIKI CABINET AND A DISSOLUTION OF THE LOWER HOUSE.

4. COMENT. JSP LEADERSHIP APPROACHED CONVENTION WITH SOME TREPIDATION AND POSTPONED IT AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, SENSING CORRECTLY THAT STILL ANOTHER INTRA-PARTY QUARREL IN FRONT OF THE MEDIA OVER LONG-STANDING UNRESOLVED IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES WOULD ONLY STRENGTHEN EVEN FURTHER IMAGE WHICH PUBLIC HOLDS OF IT AS OLD FASHIONED MARXIST PARTY UNABLE TO COPE WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES OF POST-OIL SHOCK, POST-VIETNAM JAPAN. IN EARLY FEBRUARY THE JSP WAS STILL VERY MUCH ON THE DEFENSIVE, AS IT TRIED TO EXPLAIN AWAY ITS SUPPORT OF SOHYO'S UNPOPULAR AND UNSUCCESSFUL "RIGHT TO STRIKE" STRIKE OF LAST DECEMBER AND TO KEEP ITS REBELLIOUS SA ACTIVISTS FROM FIELDING THEIR OWN CANDIDATES AGAINST INCUMBENT SOCIALIST DIET MEMBERS IN NEXT LOWER HOUSE ELECTION. RELATIVE HARMONY PREVAILING AT CONVENTION INDICATES THAT FOR JSP SUDDEN EMERGENCE OF LOCKHEED SCANDAL HAS BEEN INVALUABLE IF UNSOLICITED GIFT. IT ENABLED THE JSP LEADERSHIP TO CONVINCE WARRING FACTIONS THAT BY PAPERING OVER LONG-STANDING DIFFERENCES AND TAKING OFFENSIVE AGAINST RULING LDP, THE JSP HAS CHANCE OF SCORING IMPRESSIVE GAINS IN NEXT LOWER HOUSE ELECTION.

5. ISSUES WHICH DIVIDE THE JSP WILL NOT DISAPPEAR, HOWEVER, CONVENTION ALSO DEMONSTRATED THAT SA, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY ONLY A STUDY GROUP DEDICATED TO PROPAGATING THE TEACHINGS OF MARXIST PURIST AND FORMER KYUSHU UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR ITSURO SAKISAKA, IS NOW FULL-FLEDGED PARTY FACTION WITH ITS EYE ON LEADERSHIP POSTS AND JSP DIET SEATS. WHILE SA CAN CLAIM ALLEGIANCE OF ONLY THREE OF THE 176-MEMBER JSP PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION, IT HAS RAPIDLY EXPANDED ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INFLUENCE AMONG PARTY'S 50,000 MEMBERS (PRINCIPALLY SOHYO UNIONISTS AND INTELLECTUALS) AND NOW CONTROLS LARGE NUMBER JSP' PREFECTURAL CHAPTERS (WHICH SELECT CONVENTION DELEGATES). SA ADHERENTS ARE ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO THE JSP FORMALLY ABANDONING SUCH CLASSIC MARXIST TNETS AS DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT, AND THEY VIOLENTLY OPPOSE EFFORTS BY THE JSP'S RIGHTWING, LED BY VICE CHAIRMAN EDA, TO DEVELOP A PRACTICAL POLITICAL ALLIANCE WITH THE REST OF THE NON-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION DESPITE RATHER BLEAK PROSPECTS.

6. THESE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES ARE CERTAIN TO COME TO THE SURFACE AT THE NEXT JSP CONVENTION, NOW SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER, WHEN PARTY WILL ALSO HAVE TO ELECT NEW OFFICERS. IF, AS IS EXPECTED, SA SUPPORTERS MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO WREST AT LEAST SOME OF THE JSP'S TOP POSTS

FROM THE HANDS OF THE PARTY'S OLD-LINE FACTIONS, A MAJOR
FIGHT WILL OCCUR. UNLESS THE PARTY IS UNCOMMONLY LUCKY,
IT WILL NOT HAVE AT THAT TIME A LOCKHEED SCANDAL TO HELP
IT PULL ITSELF TOGETHER.
SHOESMITH

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